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## REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 13-16 are now pending in the application, with Claim 13 being the only independent claim.

Claims 13, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,114,020 (Misuda et al.). Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Misuda et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,175,133 (Smith et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Applicants' invention as recited in independent Claim 13, is directed to a process for producing a recording medium for ink-jet recording having an ink-receiving layer including a particulate material on a base material. The process includes the steps of grinding aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure and removing a coarse particle component by a separation treatment such that the average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure is at least 0.21  $\mu\text{m}$  and at most 1.0  $\mu\text{m}$ , and at least 90% of all particles of the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure have a particle diameter of at most 1.0  $\mu\text{m}$ , and applying onto the base material the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure subjected to the treatment of removing the coarse particle component with a binder. At least 90% by weight of the particulate material is the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure.

By making the average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure at least 0.21  $\mu\text{m}$ , the ink absorbancy is sufficiently increased to prevent ink

from one dot from overflowing to mix with ink of another dot, which would otherwise occur to lower image evenness if the average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure is less than 0.21  $\mu\text{m}$ .

The use of aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure can also be used in an ink-receiving layer to deal with the problem that an ink-receiving layer containing alumina hydrate having a pseudoboehmite structure is liable to crack. Conventionally sold aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure have been subjected to a sintering step in their production process. As a result, only particles with a large particle diameter are provided due to the particles aggregating during the sintering step. As indicated in Comparative Example 1 in Applicants' specification, a recording medium utilizing conventional aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure as a main component provides only images of low gloss. In contrast, the present invention can solve such problems by grinding the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure and removing a coarse particle component to obtain particles having a specific particle diameter.

The patent to Misuda et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest grinding aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure, as recited by Claim 13. Rather, this patent is understood to merely show the use of alumina hydrate of the trade name 520 manufactured by Nissan Chemical Industries, Ltd., as discussed at column 4, lines 50 and 51. Page 3 of the Office Action cites Table 4 of the Hirose et al. patent to show that this alumina hydrate has a  $\gamma$ -crystal structure. But Table 4 of this patent merely lists the product " $\gamma$ -Alumina sol (Alumina Sol 520, trade name, product of Nissan Chemical Industries, Ltd.)". A definitive definition of the structure of Alumina Sol 520 can be found in the literature of its manufacturer Nissan Chemical Industries, Ltd. Accordingly,

Applicants attach herewith a copy of a translation of a portion of a product brochure of “Alumina Sols” by Nissan Chemical Industries, Ltd. The table on page 2 indicates that Alumina Sol 520 has a boehmite structure.

Thus, the Patent Office is not understood to have satisfied its burden of proof to establish that the patent to Misuda et al. discloses or suggests grinding aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure, as recited by Claim 13. Therefore, for this reason alone, Claim 13 is not understood to be anticipated by the patent to Misuda et al.

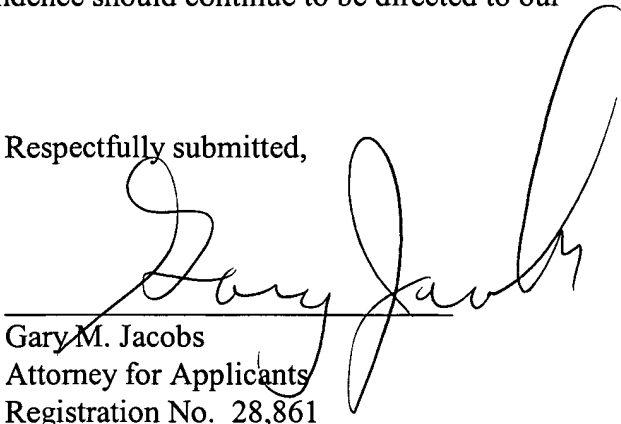
In addition, the patent to Misuda et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest that the average particle diameter of the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure is at least 0.21  $\mu\text{m}$ , as also recited by Claim 13. Therefore, for this additional reason, Claim 13 is not understood to be anticipated by the patent to Misuda et al.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claim 13. Dependent Claims 14 to 16 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. For example, Claim 15 recites that the aluminum oxide particles of the  $\gamma$ -crystal structure is an alumina obtained by heating and calcining boehmite or pseudoboehmite. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Since the patent to Misuda is not understood to anticipate the claims of this case, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request the issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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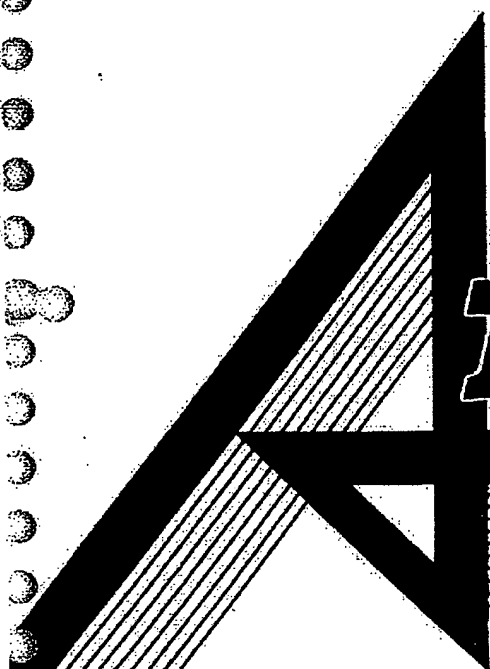
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Table on page 2 of the product brochure of "Alumina Sols" (translation)

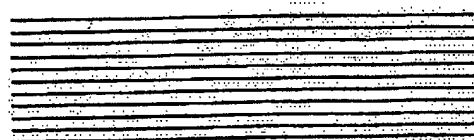
|                                    | Alumina Sol 100 | Alumina Sol 200                  | Alumina Sol 520              |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> (%) | 10-11           | 10-11                            | 20-21                        |
| pH                                 | 2.5-4.5         | 4.0-6.0                          | 2.0-5.0                      |
| spec. gravity(20°C)                | 1.09-1.14       | 1.09-1.14                        | 1.17-1.20                    |
| stabilizer                         | Cl <sup>-</sup> | CH <sub>3</sub> COO <sup>-</sup> | NO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> |
| particle form                      | feather-like    | feather-like                     | rod - particulate            |
| particle size(avg.)                | 100mμ x 10mμ    | 100mμ x 10mμ                     | 10-20mμ                      |
| s.surf.area(m <sup>2</sup> /g)     | 300-500         | 300-500                          | 200-300                      |
| particle charge                    | positive        | positive                         | positive                     |
| crystal form                       | amorphous       | amorphous                        | <b>boehmite</b>              |
| color tone                         | milky white     | milky white                      | clear milky white            |
| stability                          | semipermanent   | semipermanent                    | semipermanent                |
| freezing temp. (°C)                | 0               | 0                                | 0                            |
| visc. (25°C, C.P.)                 | 100-10000       | 50-3000                          | 5-50                         |



# アルミナゾル



日産化学



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## はじめに

アルミナゾルは水を分散媒としたアルミナ水和物(ペーパー状)のコロイド液です。このアルミナゾルは、我々が従来の特許でその製品化に成功し、既に20年以上の間多岐の分野にわたって極めて特長ある効果を發揮し、皆様にご愛用をいただいております。ここにその性質と用途について、最新の資料に基づいた説明を申し上げます。各社の御参考にご利用いただくと存じます。

# アルミナゾルの種類及び性状

## 1. 種類及び一般的性状

アルミナゾルは安価な材料としての用途の範囲により、アルミナゾル-100及びアルミナゾル-300、アルミナゾル-500の3種類があります。アルミナゾル-100、-200は、その特性として、乾燥硬化が著しく、その状態はナットロッド状の性質をもっています。アルミナゾル-500は低粘度のアルミナゾルです。一般的性状を下の表に示します。

| 項目                                 | アルミナゾル-100      | アルミナゾル-200                       | アルミナゾル-500                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> (%) | 10-11           | 10-11                            | 20-21                        |
| P H                                | 2.5-4.5         | 4.0-6.0                          | 2.0-5.0                      |
| 比重 (20°C)                          | 1.09-1.14       | 1.09-1.14                        | 1.17-1.20                    |
| 安定剤                                | Cl <sup>-</sup> | CH <sub>3</sub> COO <sup>-</sup> | NO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> |
| 粒子形                                | 羽毛状             | 羽毛状                              | 棒-球状                         |
| 粒子の大きさ (平均)                        | 100nm × 10nm    | 100nm × 10nm                     | 10-20nm                      |
| 比表面積 (m <sup>2</sup> /g)           | 300-500         | 300-500                          | 200-300                      |
| 粒子電荷                               | 陽性              | 陽性                               | 陽性                           |
| 結晶形                                | 無定形             | 無定形                              | ベーマイト                        |
| 色                                  | 乳白色             | 乳白色                              | 蒸留水乳白色                       |
| 安定性                                | 中永久的            | 中永久的                             | 中永久的                         |
| 氷結点 (°C)                           | 0               | 0                                | 0                            |
| 結晶度 (5°C, C.P.)                    | 100-10000       | 50-3000                          | 5-50                         |

また、アルミナゾル-100と-200は相溶性も良く混合使用出来ますが、アルミナゾル-500は性状が異なり、混合すると均一な分散液が出来ず、粘度が高くなる、クリーム状になるため混合使用するのは、好ましくありません。

## 2. 粒子の大きさ及び表面状態

アルミナゾルは5nm-200nmの大きさを持つアルミナナノ粒子（ベーマイト）と、固相粒子が水中の陰イオンを安定剤として分散している乳白色の粘性ある液体で、粒子の形状は図1の電子顕微鏡写真に示す通り、球状粒子の集合体です。この球状粒子は約400nmのアルミナが集合して出来ています。表面状態は図1-1、図1-2のように、コロイドに安定性を付与する陰イオンが粒子の表面及びその近辺に存在し、アルミナ粒子の安定化の役割を担っています。また、アルミナ粒子自身が陽性帯電していることは電泳法によって確かめられています。

写真1 (×10万倍) アルミナゾル-100-200

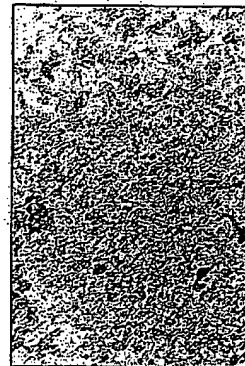
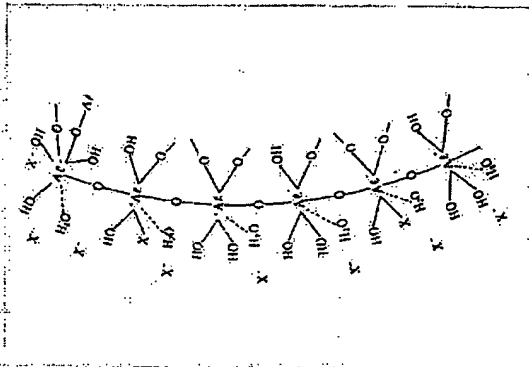


写真2 (×10万倍) アルミナゾル-500

図1-1 アルミナゾルの粒子及び表面状態 (キヤム)







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